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**Historic Mackinac.** The Historical, Picturesque and Legendary Features of the Mackinac Country. Illustrated from sketches, drawings, maps and photographs, with an original map of Mackinac Island, made especially for this work. By Edwin O. Wood, LL.D., formerly President Michigan Historical Commission, Vice-President of the Mackinac Island State Park Commission, Trustee of the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society. . . . In two volumes. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1918.

The two beautiful volumes comprise 1,500 pages of letterpress in addition to 125 pages of illustrations. A happy division of the work into two volumes assigns to Volume I the technically historical treatment of the subject, and to Volume II a wonderfully rich selection from the romantic, descriptive and legendary literature that has grown up around Mackinac Island.

The author speaks of his achievement as a "labor of love" and modestly declares that it makes "no claim to rank with the achievements of historians." Yet his labor of love extended through years of patient, zealous and discriminating toil—a toil made feasible largely through his official positions relating to the territory and the history of the Mackinac country, made vivid and attractive by many summers spent on the Island, and made copiously fruitful by his facile consultation of an extensive collection of books of travel, fiction, history, legendary lore, maps of the Great Lakes region, which he had been making for some years. His bibliography covers sixty pages, and the Index as many columns.

The first volume is not a history in the technical sense, and yet is in some respects better than such a history. It is almost "a historians' history"—not indeed of the world, but—of Mackinac Island. The *Jesuit Relations* is the most frequently quoted source, and the many excerpts from that stately series of volumes are highly interesting and informative, valuable alike for their supreme quality as original sources of history and for their attractive literary form. But the author of *Historic Mackinac*, weaving into his narrative a large number of selections from most varied sources, "new and old" (like the prudent householder of the Gospels), and often adding thus pleasantly piquant touches to the tale, finds it possible also to make the justified claim that many items are taken from books long since out of print, and

therefore not readily available to the casual reader. But books—especially pamphlets—not long out of print, are often fairly inaccessible to the casual reader. Dr. Wood devotes a whole chapter to excerpts from a monograph by Judge Brown, and tells us in a footnote (I, 90) that “the quotations in this chapter are taken from a reprint which does *not bear date and place of publication*. The *Parish Register of the Mission of Michilimackinac* forms the second part of the pamphlet, and begins at page 29, the author being Judge Edward Osgood Brown, a noted jurist and eminent scholar, of Chicago, Illinois, who is a recognized authority upon the history of the Mackinac country.” The phrase upon which the reviewer has ventured to confer italics is quite significant to the librarian and the bibliographer, both of whom have their own troubles with housing and indexing pamphlets; and the casual reader is in still greater danger of missing Judge Brown’s charming and most illuminating monograph. We thank Dr. Wood for enshrining so much of it within a stately volume and thus ensuring it a long life and a wider circle of admirers. For if ever a deft inspirational touch could make the dust of centuries glow with actuality, could ever articulate anew the dead bones of the past into a living and breathing frame, that is the miracle performed by Judge Brown with the *Parish Register*. Read the chapter—having always in mind the normally forbidding and dry-as-dust character of a parish register—and pronounce just judgment! One quotation from it may be permitted here (p. 99): “There is another matter to which I think the register bears interesting testimony. It has been a too common opinion, springing from prejudice against the Church, that the Catholic missionaries’ apparent success among the Indians arose from their taking them into the Church without sufficiently instructing them. I think Parkman even allows himself somewhere to speak of the Catholic missionary contenting himself with sprinkling a few drops of water upon the forehead of his savage proselyte, while the Protestants tried to win him from his barbarism and prepare his savage heart for the truths of Christianity. There is absolutely no truth in this, and no evidence has ever been cited for it. And this register, like all the missionary registers, is affirmative proof of its falsity.” The Judge develops this affirmative proof through several pages of citation from the register.

Although Dr. Wood thus extracts copiously from a multitude of writers, he nevertheless tells the story himself in an attractive and, despite occasional digressions made to illustrate some particular phase of ethnology or chronology, in a fairly consecutive manner. He furnishes a skilful setting, and not merely a literary cement, for a rich mosaic whose separate fragments have been taken from the works of other men of most varied minds and literary styles.

Mackinac history is somewhat like the biography of an important statesman. The Island, like the man, becomes a little stage for a great drama of history; for the story of Mackinac, like the life of a great man, touches many wide and diversified interests and activities and thus becomes a cross-section of history. The intrigues of European diplomacy have their repercussions in America. "In order," said Macaulay, "that Frederick the Great might rob a neighbor whom he had promised to defend, black men fought on the coast of Coromandel and red men scalped each other by the Great Lakes of North America." And events of world-wide significance, signalized by names that breathe of romance and wild adventuring into the aboriginal wildernesses, occurred in the Mackinac country under the successive flags of France, England, and the United States. The complete story even of this small stage of Mackinac Island is entrancing at once and greatly informative.

Dr. Wood has conferred something of an encyclopedic scope upon his two volumes. The first, for instance, incorporates the exhaustive treatise of Monsignor O'Brien on the names of places of interest on the Island (I. 507-606). Dr. Wood dedicates his work to Monsignor O'Brien in terms of warmest appreciation. This volume also contains (pp. 379-429) an account of the churches on the Island as well as a chronology (pp. 681-697) from 1534 to 1918. Similarly, the second volume includes treatises on the Indian names in the Mackinac country (pp. 624-640) and on the flowering plants, ferns and their allies of the Island (pp. 641-678), although its main purpose was "to bring together and preserve for the reader of today and in years to come, some of the graphic descriptions given by celebrated travelers who visited the Island many years ago. To this end, Volume II is largely a collection of

extracts from books long since out of print, all of which will ever hold an important place in the story of 'The Fairy Isle.'"

The printing is excellently done. If there be misprints, the reviewer has failed to observe them. Attention may be directed, however, to an obvious slip of the pen: "Nearly three hundred years ago Jacques Cartier . . . was commissioned . . . to find a passage-way through the newly discovered lands to the Golden West. In 1535 he reached the site of Montreal . . ." The reader will see immediately that "three hundred" should be "four hundred."

There are some unnecessary repetitions which, however, are easily pardonable in a work of this kind; *e. g.*, Father Dablon's account of the Mission of St. Ignace is quoted extensively (I, 17-21) and is repeated in indirect narration (p. 25 *seq.*).

The Appendix of highly interesting documents (I, 609, 676) would have proved additionally valuable if references were made to it in appropriate portions of the text. And if, whensoever an Indian word or name appeared in the text for the first time, a reference were forthwith given to the enlightening chapter on "Indian Names in the Mackinac Country" (II, 624-640), the reader would be spared some futile cogitation and perplexity; *e.g.*, with respect to the meaning of "Michilimackinac," the identity of the Chippewas and Ojibways, the transliteration of Outaouacs into Ottawas, and the like. For he may well be puzzled as he reads such explanations as these respecting Michilimackinac: "The Indians were attracted to the Island waters especially by the abundance of fish . . . 'This spot is the most noted in all these regions for its abundance of fish,' says Dablon, 'since, *in savage parlance*, this is its native country. . . .' Indeed, these waters contained fish not common to all the region" (I, 25, 26). We have italicized Father Dablon's phrase, as it seems to furnish the meaning of the word *Michilimackinac* as the native haunts of the fish. The same meaning is implied in Constance Fenimore Woolson's article on Mackinac (quoted, I, 33): "The deep water around Fairy Island was called 'the home of the fishes.' Day after day the canoes assembled at Iroquois Point . . ." The reader will contentedly accept this information, and will therefore be surprised to find Cadillac quoted (I, 74) as follows: "The word Missilimakinak means

'Island of the Tortoise.' The reason why it is so called may be either because it is shaped like a tortoise, or because turtles are found in the vicinity." And further on, Alexander Henry is quoted (I, 203), giving the same meaning to the word without hesitation, but applying it somewhat differently: "It is this mountain which constitutes that high land, in the middle of the island, of which I have spoken before, as of a figure considered as resembling a *turtle*, and therefore called *michilimackinac*." Balanced thus between conflicting authorities, the reader will experience a new shock when he reads (II, 53) that "the modern meaning of the name Missilimackinac among the Indians is 'the place of dancing spirits'"; and, a little further on (II, 54), that the word means "great monsters." Now Dr. Wood includes a chapter on Indian names. It occurs towards the close of the second volume, and therefore might easily escape the observation of one who is reading the first volume. A reference to that chapter and to the word Michilimackinac would have saved the reader from being both puzzled and misled, and such a reference might well have been made in each of the cases of derivation cited here. In that chapter Dr. Wood informs us that "the meaning of the term is utterly unknown to the Indians of the present day. The whites, too, have invariably failed in analyzing and explaining the word" (II, 631). Analyzing the word etymologically, Dr. Wood appears inclined to think that it refers to the "arch rock," the greatest natural curiosity on the Island. It has nothing to do with "the home of the fishes," or a resemblance to a turtle, or "great monsters."

In the mere matter of the spelling of the Island's name, the reader may also be confused through lack of an early footnote. There is indeed a valuable digression (I, 16-17) on the geographical application of the name and on its correct pronunciation, in which the author explains that when (except in quotation) he uses the word "Mackinac" (pronounced Mackinaw) he is referring to the Island, and when he uses the word "Mackinaw" he is referring to the site on the south side of the Straits. But the reader will soon come upon highly varied forms of the longer word. Thus Dablon writes it Missilimackinac (I, 17); Father Le Clerq, Michilimackinac (I, 30); the author himself ends it with "c" (I, 16) and with "ck" (I, 49), while a quotation (I, 211)

from the *Jesuit Relations* ends the word with "a," omitting both the "c" and the "ck." An early reference to the chapter on Indian names would have helped the reader, as he would find four variants there given of the name, together with an interesting declaration that Father Marquette's spelling, "Michilimakinong," comes nearest to the Indian pronunciation ("Mishini-makinang"). Dr. Wood might have added that the word is spelled in no less than thirteen different ways in the *Jesuit Relations*.

A similar difficulty will confront "the general reader" in the word *Outaouacs*, introduced first in Father Dablon's narrative (I, 18). Must such a reader (and Dr. Wood's volumes presumably contemplated principally that large class) be expected forthwith to recognize the Ottawas? The elaborate Index will not help him, for the word is not given there; and he would be grateful for some such reference as "See *Ottawa*, II, 632."

The transliteration of Indian names into French, English (and may we not add "United States?") vocal equivalents is often puzzling even to a thoughtful reader. There is comfort in the genial confession made by Judge Brown in his lecture (already referred to) on the parish register of Michilimackinac. Although certified by Dr. Wood as "a recognized authority upon the history of the Mackinac country" (I, 90, footnote), Judge Brown admits that he was for a time puzzled by the word *Panis* in the parish register, that he consulted dictionaries of ancient and modern French for a hint of the word's meaning, and that he finally found a clue in a note of the *Wisconsin Historical Collections*—a note not explaining the word but merely referring casually to the tribe of the *Panis* ("evidently pawnee," concludes Judge Brown).

Finally, the rich abundance of illustrations forms a striking feature of the two volumes. Some of them lack, however, such an explanatory legend as the reader of a historical work ordinarily expects to find. Thus the full-page illustration facing page 80 (Vol. I) is entitled "Jean Nicolet's Introduction to the Indians." Is the picture an original design for this work, or is it mayhap from the photograph of an oil painting? The same question might be asked concerning the full-page pictures facing pages 2 (Jacques Cartier), 3 (Champlain), 160 (Father Gabriel Richard), 188 (Alexander Henry), 273 ("The Missionary"), etc. Even the

smaller illustrations (*e. g.*, p. 121) would become more interesting if an indication of their source were given. We find, for instance, a picture of "The Griffin" (I, 59) apparently reproduced from an old print, in which the vessel is represented as very different in appearance from that in Koerner's painting, "The Sailing of the Griffin" (opposite page 50 in the same volume). The reader would naturally wish to know the source of the illustration on page 59; and, by the way, he might also wish to know why historians refer to the vessel as *The Griffin* rather than the *Griffon*. The Index gives only *Griffin*.

The excellent care expended on the volumes by both author and publisher leads the present reviewer to offer these suggestions *de minimis* for consideration for a second edition of this interesting and valuable work.

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